

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3638
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USDA WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY PANAMA

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DOT FOR FHWA, USDA FOR APHIS, PANAMA FOR FHWA AND FAS

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAGR, ELTN, CO
SUBJECT: SUMMARY. U.S. AND COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT REPRESENT-
ATIVES CONCERNED WITH DARIEN GAP HIGHWAY/ AFTOSA PROGRAMS
MET IN BOGOTA AUGUST 31 - SEPTEMBER 1. IN SPITE OF
COLOMBIAN CLAIMS THAT AFTOSA PROGRAM WAS GOING WELL
AND THAT EXISTING PROBLEMS COULD BE OVERCOME BY MINOR
ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES, ENTIRE USDEL STOOD FIRM IN
INSISTING THAT CONTINUATION OF CURRENT AFTOSA PROGRAM,
ANY NEW AFTOSA PROGRAM AND CERTAINLY ANY HIGHWAY
CONSTRUCTION IN COLOMBIA DEPEND ON COLOMBIAN AGREEMENT
TO MAKE SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES IN ADMINISTRATION OF JOINT
AFTOSA PROGRAM. END SUMMARY..

2. AUGUST 31 MORNING SESSION OF SENIOR REVIEW GROUP
MEETING WAS DEVOTED LARGELY TO PRESENTATION BY COLOMBIAN
PROJECT DIRECTORS OF REPORT OF ACTIVITIES, WHICH STRESSED
ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO THE EXCLUSION OF DEFICIENCIES. FOLLOW-
ING READING OF REPORT, WHICH HAD BEEN GIVEN TO EMBASSY
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ONLY TWO DAYS BEFORE MEETING, USDEL REQUESTED RECESS IN
ORDER TO STUDY REPORT AND PREPARE COMMENTS. DURING QUESTION
AND ANSWER PERIOD IN AFTERNOON, USDEL ZEROED IN ON
ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL DEFICIENCIES IN PROGRAM,
THUS LAYING GROUNDWORK TO SUPPORT LATER PROPOSALS FOR
SIGNIFICANT ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES. AT ONE POINT DURING
DISCUSSION, REPRESENTATIVE OF VECOL (MIXED COMPANY

PRODUCING FMD VACCINE) EXPRESSED OPINION THAT AFTOSA PROGRAM WOULD BE EFFECTIVE ONLY IF IT WERE OPERATED BY SOME KIND OF JOINT COMMISSION.

3. AT SEPARATE TRANSPORTATION/PUBLIC WORKS MEETING, PARTICIPANTS REVIEWED STATUS OF US COURT INJUNCTION, PROJECT 2A (SWAMP), LONG TERM FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS, AND POSSIBLE ADMINISTRATIVE/IMPLEMENTATION PROBLEMS. JOINT STATEMENT PREPARED BY PARTICIPANTS STRESSED NECESSITY OF A SUCCESSFULLY FUNCTIONING JOINT AFTOSA CONTROL PROGRAM PRIOR TO INITIATION OF HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION.

4. PLENARY SESSION OF CONSULATATIVE GROUP MEETING OPENED BY READING OF JOINT TRANSPORTATION/PUBLIC WORKS STATEMENT, FOLLOWING WHICH USDA SPOKESMAN READ FROM LIST OF AFTOSA PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS (FEW), TECHNICAL PROBLEMS (MORE) AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS (MANY). USDA SPOKESMAN STRESSED THE NEED FOR CHANGES IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAM, EMPHASIZED THE DIFFICULTIES IN OBTAINING FURTHER FINANCING FOR THE PROGRAM UNLESS THERE ARE CHANGES, AND PROMISED TO PRESENT AT THE AFTERNOON MEETING AN OUTLINE OF HOW IMPROVEMENTS MIGHT BE OBTAINED BY REMOVING PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITY FROM ICA (COLOMBIAN AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE) AND TRANSFERRING IT TO A BILATERAL COMMISSION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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REPORTING DIRECTLY TO THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE OR HIS DESIGNEE.

COLOMBIAN HAD NO COMMENTS ON US STATEMENTS DURING MORNING SESSION.

5. AFTERNOON EXECUTIVE SESSION OF CONSULATATIVE GROUP WAS DEVOTED ALMOST ENTIRELY TO AFTOSA PROGRAM. AGRICULTURE ASSISTANT SECRETARY MEYER READ A BRIEF MEMORANDUM NOTING THAT NO US PARTICIPATION IN HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION IN COLOMBIA WILL BE PERMITTED IN AREAS OF FMD DANGES UNLESS PROPER MEASURES ARE TAKEN TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF THE DISEASE. AS REGARDS THE AFTOSA PROGRAM PER SE, THE MEMORANDUM SET FORTH THE USG BELIEF THAT IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THERE BE ESTABLISHED A JOINT US-COLOMBIAN COMMISSION THAT WOULD HAVE FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR BUDGETING, SCHEDULING AND MAINTAINING APPROPRIATE MANPOWER, DAILY OPERATIONS AND PROGRESS REPORTING. STATEMENT (SPANISH VERSION OF WHICH PROVIDED COLOMBIANS AT EVENING RECEPTION) WAS ACCOMPANIED BY LIST OF AREAS OF AUTHORITY THAT COMMISSION MUST HAVE IN ORDER TO MEET PROGRAM OBJECTIVES. USDEL SAID THAT IT DID NOT EXPECT AN IMMEDIATE REACTION TO PROPOSALS BUT DID NEED A REACTION WITHIN 30 DAYS FOR

PURPOSES OF BUDGET PLANNING IN THE U.S. AS FINAL POINT
OF BUSINESS, CG APPROVED PROGRAM OPERATING BUDGET FOR
BALANCE OF CY 1977.

6. COMMENT. US POSITION AT THIS MEETING REPRESENTED
THE MOST CONCERTED EFFORT YET TO CONVINCE THE GOC OF
THE NEED TO ACCEPT DRASTIC CHANGES IN THE ADMINISTRATION
OF THE AFTOSA PROGRAM AS THE BASIS FOR HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION
OR ANY ONGOING JOINT AFTOSA EFFORT. WHILE THE COLOMBIAN
RESPONSE DURING THE MEETINGS WAS MUTED, WE BELIEVE THAT
THE MESSAGE WAS UNDERSTOOD. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN,
HOWEVER, WHAT THE FINAL COLOMBIAN REACTION WILL BE.
JOHNSTON

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 07-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
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